

currency; painful stock market corrections; political demagoguery; lingering anger at home; and confusion about who is to blame.

These elements combine to create an environment that inevitably undermines personal liberty. Virtually all American wars have led to diminished civil liberties at home. Most of our mistakes can be laid at the doorstep of our failure to follow the Constitution. The Constitution, if we so desire, can provide needed guidance and a road map to restore our liberties and change our foreign policy. This is critical if we truly seek peace and prosperity.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. DEFAZIO) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. DEFAZIO addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

WALTER REED ARMY MEDICAL CENTER

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. CORRINE BROWN) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. CORRINE BROWN of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today with an apology. Last week, I was in the grocery store in Jacksonville, Florida. A veteran working part time told me about a friend who was at Walter Reed, and he had pictures showing the problems that were occurring there. He walked me to the car and said that there was no way he would ever vote again for a Republican after seeing what the pictures showed.

I couldn't believe what he was describing to me of a military facility. And I told him, "You can't believe everything that you see on the Internet." The next day, the very next day, the story was in the Washington Post. I am going back to that grocery store to personally apologize to that veteran. The fact that an active duty soldier was treated this way is inconceivable.

I did not vote for this war. The military is doing the job they were sent to do. There was a flaw in the mission from the beginning, and the flaw lies with us. American soldiers have performed admirably under trying conditions, conditions they were not trained for and conditions they should not be in. We won the war but lost the occupation. Our soldiers deserve better when they get back.

We can send 484 tons of money, \$12 billion, to Iraq for who knows what, but when it comes to the well-being of those soldiers, there is no money. According to the VA, it will cost \$1.7 billion to include all veterans in the VA health care system.

What are the priorities of this administration? There are all kinds of justifications, all kinds of sanctimony, frightening the American people into supporting a \$600 billion war in Iraq.

We have a \$3 trillion budget, and we are sending nearly \$1 trillion to a country of 28 million people.

We are building an embassy in Baghdad of 104 acres. This is six times larger than the United Nations compound in New York and two-thirds the acreage of Washington's National Mall. The embassy compound, 21 buildings on 104 acres, is the size of Vatican City and will be the largest in the world. It will employ over 5,500 people. The embassy will cost over \$1 billion. This is the priority of this Bush administration.

My colleagues, this war needs to come to an end. The American people want the troops home. This was the message sent loud and clear to the Bush administration during the November elections. Yet for some reason, they just don't get the message. Nearly 70 percent of the American people want us out of Iraq, and 100 percent deplore the treatment the administration is giving the veterans at the time of their most urgent need.

I will go back to Jacksonville and apologize to this veteran. I will be able to look him in the eye and say that this will not stand. We will make sure our soldiers come back to the best care this great Nation can provide.

I am reminded, in closing, of the words of the first President of the United States, George Washington, whose words are worth repeating at this time:

"The willingness with which our young people are likely to serve in any war, no matter how justified, shall be directly proportional as to how they perceive the veterans of earlier wars were treated and appreciated by their country."

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. BURTON) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. BURTON of Indiana addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

THE REALITY OF A MODERN DAY SCHOOL TEACHER

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Kansas (Mr. MORAN) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. MORAN of Kansas. Mr. Speaker, when the question is asked, other than a family member, name one person who has made a difference in your life, the most often answered response is that of a favorite teacher. This simple response speaks volumes about the influence that an educator has on the lives of a young person and the future of our Nation.

The education profession has long been known for inadequate pay but a high job satisfaction. Teachers have been willing to forfeit material gain for the joy of seeing the eyes of their students light up when they discover a dif-

ficult concept or when they grasp a new idea. We have long understood that teachers truly shape the world by their work, and their greatest product is an educated child.

Lately, though, the job satisfaction that brought so many teachers into the profession seems to have left the classroom. Unfortunately, much of this development can be attributed to No Child Left Behind. The joy of teaching has been replaced by the pressure-filled staff meetings where educators spend their time talking, not about how to help a child learn but, rather, their school's test scores.

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Morale in the education world has diminished, and more teachers are at wits end.

Recently, Holly Lindsay, a teacher in Lindsborg, Kansas, told me of her frustration with her profession. She writes, "I am a first-year teacher, and I am beginning to get very discouraged. I went into the teaching profession to help students learn and to encourage them to follow their dreams. However, I am finding that more and more of my time is spent preparing students for standardized tests. These tests do not prepare students for any career. They only teach students how to take a test. I am very disappointed with the education system right now. With all these tests, we don't have time to teach. It is also very frustrating when we have to prove our abilities with countless hours to show that we are highly qualified. In no other profession are there such lofty goals for their employees with such little benefit. I truly feel that the time and effort I put into teaching is not worth my while. No Child Left Behind is wonderful in theory, but impossible to carry out. Not every child is equal in ability, and no teacher should be expected to make it so."

The number of teachers leaving the profession is exceeding the number of teachers entering the profession by 23 percent. With over 25 percent of our teaching force eligible to retire within the next 10 years, this young educator's thoughts should be a warning. Teachers that have been career educators are bailing out as soon as they can because they do not want to deal with the unnecessary red tape and the growing pressures that are being placed upon them.

Another staggering fact is that one-third of new teachers quit the education profession within the first 3 years of teaching. In my rural Kansas district, if we have to shut the doors on rural schools it will not be because of lack of students, it will be because we cannot find the teachers to fill the teaching vacancies.

Congress must be sensitive to the responsibility we hold in making educators want to walk out of the classroom and never look back. Congress needs to look closely at our role and the trends and make sure that we are not encouraging this situation by continuing to overregulate the classroom.